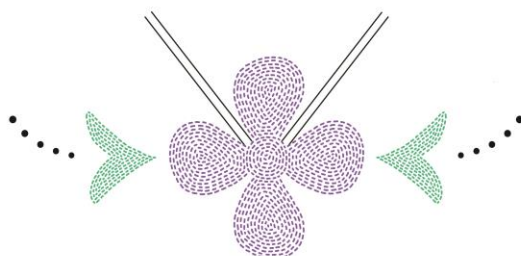


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



Enquête nationale
sur les femmes et les filles
autochtones disparues et assassinées

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Statement Gathering
Membertou First Nation
Unama'ki (Cape Breton Island), Nova Scotia**



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Wednesday November 1, 2017

Statement - Volume 72

**Deanna Sylliboy,
In relation to Annie Francis**

Statement Gathered by Marie-Audrey Girard

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NOTE

The use of square brackets [] in this transcript indicates that amendments have been made to the certified transcript in order to replace information deemed inaudible or indecipherable by the original transcriptionist. Amendments were completed by listening to the source audio recording of the proceeding and were made by Bryana Bouchir, Public Inquiry Clerk with the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQ, April 25th 2018 at Vancouver, BC.

1 Membertou, Nova Scotia

2 --- Upon commencing on Wednesday, November 1, 2017, at 9:21
3 a.m.

4 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** This is
5 Marie-Audrey with the National Inquiry. We are November
6 1st in Membertou. It is 9:21, and I'm in the room with --

7 **MS. BARBARA BERNARD:** Barbara Bernard, elder
8 support.

9 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Yes, and?

10 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Deanna Sylliboy.

11 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Yes. Well, I'll
12 just put that here to make sure that we hear well what you
13 will be telling us this morning. So, first of all, thank
14 you so much for being with us this morning. We are really
15 quite (indiscernible) that you decided to come (sic), so
16 thank you very much.

17 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** M'hm.

18 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** So my first
19 question for you would be what would you like the National
20 Inquiry and the commissioners to know today? What would
21 you like to share with them?

22 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I wasn't prepared for
23 all this. Well, I don't know. I mean like it's been
24 happening for decades and centuries, a century or more,
25 but, you know, like when there's missing and murdered women

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(Annie Francis)

1 and children, it's like there is no justice, and I guess
2 more has to be done like to put into more instead of just
3 kind of sweeping it under the carpet type thing, which
4 actually a lot of -- and I did follow it, so I stopped
5 following it because it kind of really made me angry like
6 that we're not treated as respectfully as we should be,
7 right. Like I don't know. I'm just a lot more -- I don't
8 know. There's like tons that can come from this, and I'm
9 just like -- I don't know. I'm baffled I guess.

10 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And do you know
11 anyone that had been, that what you're like discussing
12 right now that happened to that person?

13 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Well, like I know
14 they're investigating like, for instance, Tanya Brooks.
15 She was murdered, and just because people fear for their
16 lives. You know, like the witnesses need more protection
17 so that more cases can be solved. I know her mother tried
18 everything, and she said it will keep going until it's
19 solved, like her murder -- murderers come out, and -- and I
20 know it's -- she's been doing it, and then she passed away,
21 so now they're together, but, you know, it would still be
22 nice to see justice for her.

23 Her sons, like they're very close with my
24 sons, and they talk back and forth, and I don't know. I
25 just kind of took them under my wing at times, and they

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1 come around, and when I see them out and about in the
2 public, and it's like, hey, how ya doing and try to keep
3 them, but I really don't know the inside, like how they're
4 feeling. Like I imagine they're feeling just as bad as I
5 do, but, you know, it's really -- it's never a closure, I
6 guess, for unsolved ones, right, and they need the
7 closures.

8 But, no, as for me, I was a baby when my
9 mother was murdered. Her case was solved, but the person
10 only got five years for manslaughter, and he was -- and he
11 walked after those five years, and my brother was taken. I
12 didn't know her. I have a hard time finding her pictures,
13 anything. I hear stories, but they're just stories to a
14 faceless person.

15 I've grown up all my life looking for a
16 ghost is what I was doing. I never got to feel that
17 connection that I have with my daughter with my mother, so
18 it's like a piece is missing, and I'm just going around the
19 wind thinking what's best, and I know I got a lot of love
20 to give out and I do for a lot of people, but, you know,
21 it's -- it's just not the same like when you're adopted,
22 and it's like it's there. Yes, they love you and
23 everything, but that connection is not there.

24 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And can you tell
25 us a little bit more about what happened to your mother

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1 and, after that, if I can ask some questions about her as
2 well. Like what exactly happened to her?

3 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** She was -- I was told
4 the story by somebody in New Brunswick, and he -- I don't
5 know if his name was -- I'm not going to mention his name,
6 though. We did kind of like a ceremony type thing, and he
7 was having to relive what had happened, and he's like,
8 What's this little girl -- what kind of wounds is she
9 opening up for me, so -- 'cause he had to relive the whole
10 events, and there was -- he says my mother was upstairs and
11 he was up -- upstairs. He was just maybe ten years old
12 while she was there, and she was with another man, not my
13 father but another man, and he came upstairs, and I guess
14 he was really jealous and a hateful man, and when they
15 heard him come into the house, my mother told him to hide
16 underneath the bed, so when he hid under the bed, this man
17 came up and started arguing with her, and then he started
18 hitting, and he said that he seen them scuffling back and
19 forth, and then he just started hitting her more and more.
20 They went out of the room. I can't remember the whole
21 things this -- but he went out of the room and he threw her
22 down the steps, and he continually to beat her very badly
23 and to the point where she was almost dead, I guess. She
24 didn't exactly die right then and there. She died on her
25 way to the hospital.

1 And they searched for the man for the whole
2 week, and when they did find him, he was hiding upstairs in
3 a cubbyhole type thing in the house, like an attic or
4 something like that, but it was like on the side wall, so
5 they got him out, and then I've heard that he was only
6 charged five years for manslaughter. I mean he got -- he
7 walked, but my mother was gone. Like what kind of justice
8 is that?

9 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And can you tell
10 us a little bit more about your mother, how like -- like
11 how big a family she had? What was their upbringing like?

12 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I don't know. I guess
13 she was a pretty good person. She -- she was kind of a
14 protector herself, I guess, for the longest time and funny,
15 loved to laugh, I guess, full of life. I'm just -- I can't
16 remember all that much 'cause, you know, like you hear
17 these stories, and it's like, okay, well --

18 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And after that
19 happened who took care of you and your siblings?

20 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Well, my brother
21 stayed with family, and I got adopted out. My stepmother
22 passed away when I was eight years old. My stepfather
23 passed away when I was 14, and I moved to Millbrook, and
24 [Godmother], who is my godmother, and [L.J.] raised me from
25 the time I was 14 'til -- they're still in my life.

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1 Going into one family and then into another,
2 and I mean you know the love is there and you want -- you
3 want everything, but it's like I've always felt like I was
4 an outsider. I don't know. I'm just -- I can't feel a
5 connection with really anybody. As much as I love them, I
6 just don't feel. Like that part is lost, so I can just
7 imagine when other babies find out stuff and say this is
8 your family, this is who you grew up with, and then you
9 find out your blood family, and then you find out -- and
10 then another family takes you in, and it's like having
11 turmoil in your life, and [becoming at] (~~indiscernible~~)
12 peace with everything and trying to be at peace, and then,
13 you know, people tell me like, oh, your mom was a good
14 person, your mom was -- would do anything for anybody, and
15 I don't know. I'm just -- I wish I could have my mom hug
16 me and tell me everything would be okay like I see my
17 friends' moms doing to them, and I don't know.

18 It's just a lot of pain, but when you -- you
19 know, like I'm happy that I'm still around because I can
20 show my daughter and let her feel the love that I never
21 felt. I don't know. I'm just trying to do the best that I
22 can with life, I guess.

23 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And you mentioned
24 your two sons and your daughter. Do you have other kids or
25 is your family is two son and one daughter?

1 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I have one daughter
2 and four sons.

3 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Four sons.

4 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah, six
5 grandchildren and one more on the way.

6 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Oh, so
7 it's a -- it's a big family.

8 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah.

9 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Can you tell us a
10 little bit about your family, like about your -- about your
11 children?

12 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Well, they drive me
13 crazy. I don't know. They're funny. They're
14 like -- okay. They're a lot of -- well, I started work a
15 couple years ago in flagging, so, of course, my children
16 decide -- I suggested they get a job and -- but three of my
17 children are flagging with me. They don't like me for
18 leaving them too long even though like they're getting
19 bigger and -- you know, and having families of their own
20 and -- but, yeah, they're funny and they like to joke
21 around, and it's -- I don't know -- entertaining I guess.

22 They're -- it's so many different
23 personalities, but yet they all want mom, so they can never
24 stay away for too long. My daughter, she don't -- she's a
25 great mother herself. Like she has her husband, and she

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1 works alongside of me, but then she starts missing me
2 'cause she doesn't get to see me as often as she would
3 like, but then she started working with me, and, Hey, mom,
4 and, it's like, oh, okay. Why did the boss put us
5 together? I told him I didn't want to work with my
6 children, but anyway, it's okay 'cause we all have fun out
7 there, and -- yeah.

8 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Your children are
9 around you. They're --

10 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah. So I have to
11 run away at times and break free and be by myself. You
12 know, they're -- my son lived in Chapel Island for -- my
13 oldest son lived in Chapel Island for a little bit, but
14 he's back home now, and hopefully they'll get a house soon
15 and live in their own house and I could have my house back
16 to normal yet.

17 It's just a little joke for me. I love -- I
18 love them all and their girlfriends and her husband, and
19 they're -- like my grandchildren, like they make my life go
20 around, and I love them all, and --

21 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And you mentioned
22 your older brother as well. Are you still in contact with
23 him?

24 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah.

25 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Yes?

1 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah. His name is
2 [Brother]. I'm not too sure if it's [Brother] -- well,
3 I've always called him [Brother], but we don't talk much
4 about our mom or anything that happened. We don't
5 communicate like most siblings do. He is there when I need
6 him, when I need to talk to him. Yeah, and we basically
7 know about our lives as a face-front I guess. I don't
8 know. And if one of us gets sick -- well, I just found out
9 that I was his next of kin like last year. I was like
10 really shocked about that, so -- I was like, What? He
11 goes, I didn't -- no, no it's okay, but he's got real good
12 people with him too, around him, and I don't know.

13 I'm just -- he's -- I was trying to contact
14 him for this, and I have the wrong number, so he calls me.
15 He has my number, so -- and I have him on Facebook, but,
16 yeah, I work so much that I can barely think or try to
17 get -- if I try to -- like when Andrea first got ahold of
18 me, I was on the road with my cellphone, and, of course, I
19 can't have a -- or be on the phone when I'm on the paddle,
20 so I'll get back to you when I get on a break or something,
21 but, you know, most times that's how -- like I'll just
22 look, and it's like I'll call you back. It's like -- or
23 who's calling me now like. Yeah. I'm on the road more
24 than I am at home.

1 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** You mentioned
2 before we started the interview that you were not sure like
3 if you should come here or not, and --

4 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah. I -- I debated
5 on coming. I didn't know if I should or -- it was just
6 when those -- do I want to open up all these wounds and
7 tell the story or do I just want to keep it closed, keep
8 moving forward.

9 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And what
10 ultimately made you decide to -- to come here?

11 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I talked to my cousin
12 Aggie, Agnes, and she said, You really should come, your
13 mother is among the murdered and missing, so here I am.

14 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And this is a
15 really traumatic event that happened to you. Throughout
16 your life have you ever received support or health support,
17 counsellor or --

18 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I didn't really talk
19 about my feelings with counsellors. I didn't talk about a
20 lot of stuff. I just -- what was the obvious is what I was
21 talking about and never really trusted what -- let know
22 what was on the inside. Yeah. I need a cigarette.

23 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** We can totally
24 take a break if you would like to.

25 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah.

1 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Excellent. I'll
2 just turn off -- so it's 9:43, and we are putting the
3 recorder off.

4 --- Upon recessing at 9:43 a.m.

5 --- Upon resuming at 9:58 a.m.

6 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And this is
7 Marie-Audrey from the National Inquiry. We are in
8 Membertou November 1st. It's 9:58, and I am in the room
9 with?

10 **MS. BARBARA BERNARD:** Barbara Bernard, elder
11 support.

12 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And?

13 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Deanna Sylliboy.

14 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Thank you very
15 much. Now, when you were talking about your children and
16 grandchildren, so like can you let us know how old are they
17 exactly just to have an idea of like a big -- a big picture
18 of your family?

19 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** My oldest grandchild
20 is going to be nine in nine days.

21 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Oh, okay.

22 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah, and they range
23 'til -- well, we're still waiting for one to be born.

24 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And how old are
25 your kids?

1 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** 24, 22, 20, 18, and
2 one will be 17 soon on the 25th of this month.

3 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** I see. It's a
4 beautiful family, very large family. That's great. I'm
5 the only kid, and sometimes I feel a bit lonely.

6 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah, being an only
7 child and -- I don't know how that would feel.

8 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M'hm.

9 **MS. BARBARA BERNARD:** And I have 14.

10 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Oh.

11 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah.

12 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** So the mandate of
13 the National Inquiry is to find about the system and cause
14 of violence against indigenous women and girls, so I have
15 some questions now, and maybe they're a little bit
16 difficult questions, so if you feel uncomfortable like
17 replying to them, just let me know and we'll -- I will
18 switch your question.

19 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Okay.

20 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** So I was wondering
21 if -- to the best of your knowledge if you are aware if at
22 any point your mother suffer any kind of abuse during her
23 life.

24 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I'm not too sure. I'm
25 not really comfortable answering that.

1 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** No problem. No
2 problem at all, and I will have a similar question about
3 yourself is at any point of your life when you were a kid
4 or during your teenager time or your adult life did you
5 suffer any kind of abuse? That could be emotional,
6 physical, sexual, psychological abuses.

7 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I've suffered sexual
8 assault, sexual abuse with my adopted -- my stepbrother and
9 his friends. I don't know the discipline. I'm not sure.
10 I'd get switches and my hair -- like after my second mother
11 passed away, my father went with another woman, and like I
12 was -- when I got grounded -- at times her daughter would
13 ground me and lock me up in a room only to be let out for
14 supper and going to school. Her -- my father's girlfriend
15 would like -- pulled my hair, and I don't know. I was
16 really rotten, though, towards them. I didn't want anybody
17 else like to step in as being my mom, I guess. I mean I
18 was really -- gave them a really hard time, and then it
19 just -- like as an adult, I know why you need another human
20 to be -- I can understand that, but I mean I don't know.

21 I've gone through a lot, and that's a part
22 of me that I don't like to let out. My -- when we lived in
23 Chapel Island, my parents drank, and I could -- they
24 had -- there was parties. I can remember people being
25 drunk around me, and like there was their friends that took

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1 me away from it to -- until they sobered up and come and
2 get me, take me back home. I don't know. It must have
3 been like a normal thing back then 'cause it seemed like
4 everywhere -- most everywhere that I have went, there was
5 drinking and some kind of abuse that I've seen going on,
6 and I could --

7 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And the abuse you
8 were talking, you were mentioning, do you know if your
9 parents were aware of it from your stepbrother or was it
10 ever reported to police or was there any action that was
11 taken?

12 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** It actually was after
13 my mother passed away that it came out. I'm not too sure
14 how it happened. I can't exactly remember, but it
15 was -- it was while we were in Membertou actually when it
16 came out when my stepbrother was doing this to me, and we
17 did go to court for it, and I don't know what he got,
18 what -- what happened or I don't know if he was just put on
19 probation or --

20 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And how old were
21 you -- were you when that happened?

22 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Well, it started out
23 when I was like four or five and didn't stop 'til I was 11.

24 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Okay. It went on
25 for a long time, and you were still young, so to the best

1 of your knowledge how did the police deal with the
2 investigation and the court case, and like what was the
3 institutional response to (indiscernible)?

4 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** They asked me
5 questions -- I can remember that -- and I told them. I
6 can't remember exactly the questions. That's -- like I
7 said, I blocked out a lot of stuff, and, yeah, there's -- I
8 don't know. I'm just -- alls I can remember is a big
9 courtroom, and we went into court, and I had to testify and
10 had to point him out, and it was just overwhelming, I
11 guess, as a child, so it's really --

12 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And have you
13 received support after that because it's quite traumatic.
14 It must have been quite difficult.

15 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** No.

16 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** No? And is there
17 something that you think you would like to seek for after?
18 Do you think it's -- you will need support or how do you
19 feel about that?

20 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** It was then, in the
21 past, and a lot of keys to my growing up was forgiveness.
22 I forgave everybody that has hurt me in any way, and it's a
23 big release, and I find if you hold onto the anger, then
24 you're just going to be miserable, and I don't hold onto
25 it.

1 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** I see. [I
2 understand] (~~Indiscernible~~). You look like a really strong
3 person.

4 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I guess when you're
5 growing up and, you know, you go through a lot of things in
6 life and growing into adulthood, and then it's like
7 you -- I was like angry with God for the longest time,
8 angry, just angry. Why did you take my mom? Why? And so
9 a lot of why's got kind of answered in some ways, and then
10 it's like why was I put on this earth? Why did I come?
11 Why was I born? But there's a reasoning for everything, so
12 they say. I don't know.

13 I guess my reasoning is to help a lot of
14 people that do suffer and try to make sense of everything,
15 and my life's become too, okay, I'm here for a reason.
16 What is it? Then I became to helping -- like finding my
17 spirituality sides and spiritual side of my life, and I
18 started questioning, okay, well, what's this? Why -- you
19 know, like just normal curiosity questions, and -- and then
20 when I finally went into a sweat, and that was really
21 healing and helpful, and you forgive a lot of things, the
22 bad things that has happened to you, and it's a big
23 release. You're not angry anymore. You're not -- you're
24 not miserable anymore. You let -- you just let God take
25 care of things, like the Creator. You hand over -- I hand

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1 over all my problems to him and just take them, and I don't
2 know. I guess the more you hand over, the less you have to
3 deal with. Not really -- you want to deal with -- you want
4 to help as your children are growing and try to keep the
5 bad stuff away and protect them what all you can or try to,
6 and so it's really a lot of struggle. I don't know. I'm
7 just trying to be at peace, laughter and sit down and be
8 serious when I have to be and --

9 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And what kind of
10 change would you like to see in the future for Indigenous
11 women and girls? What do you think are the priorities?

12 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Well, a lot -- need a
13 lot more help than, you know, to -- a lot of people
14 have -- I don't know how to say this, but like they -- I
15 always tell people forgiveness is the key, and for some,
16 maybe they do need the extra support and seek out the
17 support that they need, especially when there's somebody
18 like my cousin Virginia Pictou. She's missing, and, you
19 know, it's unsettling that there's no closure, so, you
20 know, we try to think where she could be or -- you know,
21 and then you hear lots of stories about stuff, and it would
22 just be nice to just -- if she is found dead or alive, you
23 know. People need closure.

24 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And when did
25 Virginia went missing exactly?

1 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I think it was April
2 or (indiscernible) February. I know the year's '93, and I
3 think it was April or -- Agnes would be able to --

4 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** So in April '93 or
5 in the year '93.

6 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** In the -- in --

7 **MS. BARBARA BERNARD:** I'm not sure, but I
8 think you're right, it's in April '93. I don't know the
9 exact date either, but it can -- it can be verified by
10 Agnes.

11 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah. Okay. Yeah.
12 So yeah. You know, like I could feel her pain because
13 there is no closure for them, and when you don't have a
14 closure, that wound stays open.

15 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Of course.
16 Closure is important.

17 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** M'hm.

18 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And can you tell
19 us a little bit about Virginia and what happened to her?

20 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I'm not too sure what
21 happened with her. She will be -- her sister is here, her
22 two brothers, and they're --

23 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Okay.

24 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** -- testifying to that
25 and making statements, so --

1 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Okay. No, no
2 problem.

3 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I just -- alls I know
4 is just we would like her to be found and so we can, you
5 know, feel the relief, I guess, and be able to mourn
6 properly and whether she's alive or dead. Like if she's
7 alive, great. If she's dead, then, you know, it's --

8 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** To know, just to
9 know.

10 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah. It's the
11 unknown that's unsettling.

12 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M'hm.

13 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah.

14 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** So maybe if you
15 continue talking before asking Virginia, what do you think
16 are the priorities right now for women and -- women and
17 girls -- Indigenous women and girls? Sorry. So you talk a
18 little bit about more help, some extra support. Do you
19 have any other opinions or ideas that you would like to
20 share with us?

21 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Well, I would -- you
22 know, I think there's more -- people would feel more
23 comfortable if it was on the cultural side, like to see
24 counsellors that are the same race that understand. You
25 know what I mean like?

1 **MS. BARBARA BERNARD:** Related to our culture
2 and our --

3 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah, and like --

4 **MS. BARBARA BERNARD:** (Indiscernible).

5 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** -- just be -- so we
6 need more of our indigenous women and men that can help
7 heal in the process, I guess, and not a lot go through this
8 field, I mean a lot go to school to go be a counsellor
9 or -- you know, 'cause physician and everything, but the
10 best kind I would think would be the ones that had lived
11 it --

12 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M'hm.

13 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** -- the ones that would
14 really understand where they're coming from, and, you know,
15 don't need a certificate to sit down and understand what
16 somebody is telling you, so, you know, like normal everyday
17 people that want to help, that can reach out or -- you
18 know, like I always say, well, a lot of people have come to
19 me and talked to me. I've listened to them, and that's
20 what I did. I listened and not -- tried to let them talk
21 about their hurt, and then I would try like, okay, well,
22 what if we did this or what if you did this, and I'll tell
23 them a little bit of my problems, and it's not very much,
24 but, you know, just to give them a clue that, yes, I've
25 been in your shoes. So I think there needs to be more of

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1 that like within the communities and the cultural part of
2 everything and -- because if you live it, then you know.
3 You understand it --

4 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M'hm.

5 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** -- instead of having a
6 degree and going by what the book is trying to tell you,
7 right, so --

8 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** For myself today,
9 that's the question I wanted to ask you. I was wondering
10 if there's anything else that you're thinking or that you
11 would like to share today with us and the Commission.

12 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Well, my brother was
13 accidentally shot. His name was Ronald. If my mother was
14 still alive, I think I would know my brother, I would
15 remember him, and like I know my older brother and -- but
16 it would be nice to have known him too.

17 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** When did that
18 happen exactly?

19 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Oh, my Lord. I wish I
20 would have been able to contact my brother 'cause he knows
21 more 'cause he's the old -- he's -- he's the oldest, and my
22 other brother that was shot was the middle child, and I'm
23 the baby, so, you know, I think it was in the seventies,
24 '70 -- maybe around '75. I'm not too sure but just --

1 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And do you
2 know -- to the best of your knowledge -- I know you were
3 still real young when that happened -- do you know how he
4 was shot exactly? You told us it was accidentally, but do
5 you have a little bit more details about what happened?

6 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** There's a few stories
7 going around, so I really don't know. I've heard that they
8 were playing cops and robbers or they were going hunting
9 and my oldest cousin grabbed his father's rifle, which was
10 still loaded and he didn't know it was still loaded, and
11 got shot. Like -- like I don't know the exact details.

12 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M'hm.

13 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** But I mean I think
14 it's eating away at my cousin, but -- you know, for doing
15 it. I mean like how do I -- the justice system may fail
16 you, but the Creator won't. Like with my mother's
17 murderer, he may have gotten five years from the justice
18 side, but on the spiritual side he had hate, so he was
19 life-sentenced.

20 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And have you heard
21 of him after or do you know if --

22 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I know he's -- he
23 died, and I know that his body was held for two weeks at
24 the morgue, and that's -- and that's all I know, and it's
25 like good, you know.

1 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** So we were talking
2 a little bit about what you think can be better for future,
3 so like you've been talking about the justice system during
4 our interview.

5 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** M'hm.

6 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** So do you think
7 there are anything that they should --

8 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Well, there should
9 be -- everything is about fairness these days, right? Yes,
10 manslaughter. Back then it's like, oh, well, it's another
11 Native gone. Today maybe get 10, 15 years, but there will
12 never be any sort of justice when a person is taken from
13 you. They can't right what has been taken. Yes, you get
14 to see a little bit of justice that happened to that
15 person, but the hurt -- the hurt goes on forever until you
16 die. There is no -- I guess there is no real justice, and
17 then people are scared to come out and -- if they have
18 witnessed. No, I didn't see nothing. People are scared to
19 talk. People are scared to -- like you know, why should
20 you be scared? Why are you fearing for your life? Why?
21 If it's going to help a family, talk. If it's going
22 to -- you know, like you did the wrong. Why are you
23 running? Like, why are you getting people to cover for you
24 like unless there is no conscience with them.

1 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Do you -- I'm
2 sorry. Go ahead.

3 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** I know there's people
4 trying to find justice for a lot of stuff, and I guess it's
5 the knowing. They want to know instead of the unknown, and
6 the real justice comes when you know what happened.

7 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** You mentioned that
8 your brother may have some information. Do you think -- do
9 you think he would be interested in giving a statement?
10 Because we won't be here. Like the Commission, the
11 National Inquiry won't be here, but we still will have
12 someone here that will be taking statement. Do you think
13 he would be interested in providing a statement?

14 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Might be. I'm not too
15 sure. I would have to ask him.

16 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Okay, or if anyone
17 else would like to provide their statement as well. As a
18 Commission we won't be here anymore, but we have someone
19 that could take the statement, and, as you said, your
20 brother looked like he has other kind of information --

21 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** M'hm.

22 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** -- so that could
23 be as well interesting to receive a statement and to know
24 about him.

1 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** M'hm. Yeah, for sure.
2 I'll ask him when I head back towards home. Just give me a
3 card or something that I can hand to him.

4 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Excellent, and I
5 was wondering if there's anything that you would like to
6 share, if you have anything else that you would like to
7 share with me and with the Commission this morning, and if
8 something comes to your mind at one point, you can give us
9 a call, and, as I said, there will be someone, so if you
10 want to add something to your statement at one point, it's
11 a possibility because I know quite -- it could be quite
12 overwhelming in the morning to think about all those
13 things, so if at one point you think about something else
14 that you would like to add, you're more -- more than
15 welcome to do so and to get in touch with the person that
16 will be here.

17 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah, for sure. I
18 can't really think of anything right now, but, you know, I
19 just hope that all these stories and more is done to the
20 missing and murdered like.

21 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And -- yeah. So
22 really thank you so much for sharing your story and let us
23 know about your mother as well. I know it has been many
24 years now that she left, that she has been gone, but thank
25 you. It's important for us to know about her, about you

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1 and about, you know, what women and girls -- indigenous
2 women and girls have to go through and how we can like
3 changes (sic) things for a better future. I know you
4 weren't sure you wanted to come this morning, but really
5 really grateful myself that you came and that you shared
6 this story with us.

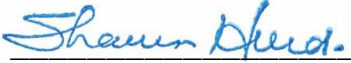
7 **MS. DEANNA SYLLIBOY:** Yeah.

8 **MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** So if it's okay
9 with you, I will turn the recorder and the video camera off
10 and -- yes. So it is 10:27. So it's 10:27, and interview
11 is done.

12 --- Upon adjourning at 10:27 a.m.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Shawn Hurd, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this matter.


Shawn Hurd.

Shawn Hurd

March 7, 2018